

like Mr. Gould's *P. australis*, must therefore be held synonymous with the well-known *P. cristatus*.

But it is still probable that we have in this country a distinct race of the Crested Grebe, distinguishable by the underparts being of a uniform rufous-grey, instead of silvery-white, stained with chestnut on the sides. I treated this bird as *P. hectori* in another state of plumage, although expressing doubt on the subject. I cannot discover that *P. cristatus* in any condition, sexual or seasonal, presents this peculiarity, which is constant in all Dr. Hector's specimens from certain localities.

Dr. Hector considers the dark-breasted Grebe (of which there are specimens in the Colonial Museum at Wellington) a totally distinct bird, and states that he found it inhabiting the lakes of the interior, while the white-breasted one was confined exclusively to the lakes bordering on the coast. If this should hereafter prove to be a distinct species, I must claim from naturalists its recognition as *P. hectori*.

Wanganui, New Zealand,
March 16, 1870.

XXXIV. Note on the "*Tchagra*" of *Le Vaillant*.

By E. L. LAYARD, F.Z.S. &c.

IN my 'Birds of South Africa' (p. 160) I have, following Swainson's lead, identified this bird as *Lanius erythropterus*, Linn. (*Telophonus erythropterus*, Swains.); but I have always been puzzled that no specimen with a *black crown* ever came to hand from any of my correspondents; neither could I personally find one so distinguished, either at Nelspoort or Zootendals Vley, the only two places where it had occurred to me. Not without serious misgivings, therefore, I came to the conclusion that I had never received (or procured) a full adult male in breeding-plumage, and I let "*Le Tchagra*" stand as a synonym of *T. erythropterus*.

Some few weeks ago I received a specimen from Mr. Ortlepp, procured at Port Elizabeth July 29th, which again revived all my suspicions. Surely this bird answered closely to Swainson's *Telophonus longirostris* (Anim. Menag. p. 282)! What

did *Le Vaillant* mean by "la partie supérieure de la tête est d'un noir brun légèrement teint d'olivâtre"? Surely not the "*black*" of Swainson's description? I wrote to my most likely correspondents, and could not find that any of them had ever seen a *black-crowned bird*.

Just at this juncture a new correspondent, Mr. H. C. Harford, of Natal, forwarded thence a small parcel of birds, and to my delight a *Telophonus* appeared among them. Half a glance sufficed to show it differed from our common Cape bird; and hastily turning it over, I found a "*black crown*"! To my mind the mystery is now solved, but I wish to call the attention of naturalists at home, who have series of specimens from Spain, North Africa, Senegal and elsewhere, to this subject, to confirm or controvert my impression.

The "*Tchagra*" of *Le Vaillant* (pl. 70) is not *Lanius erythropterus*, Linn.; Shaw, Gen. Zool. vii. p. 301; Cuvier, i. p. 271; *Le Pie-grièche rousse à tête noir du Senegal*, Pl. Enl. 479, f. 1; nor (teste Cuvier) *L. rutilus*, Lath. var. γ ; nor *Telophonus senegalensis* (L.), Hartl., Orn. Westafr. p. 105.

Nor is it Swainson's *T. erythropterus*, B. W. Africa, i. p. 235; but it is Swainson's *T. longirostris* (ut suprà).

It differs from the true *L. erythropterus* in having a more elongated, less deep and broad, and more curved bill, in wanting the black head; the crown is never more than a dark brown. The rufous of the wing-feathers is not so rich and clear, the white stripe over the eye is not so large or distinct; the grey of the underparts* is not so clear nor so distinct from the rufous-grey of the upperparts. The scapulars and tertials are not so black; and the middle tail-feathers do not show the narrow brown bars with such distinctness.

The bill, however, is the most prominent difference; and *Le Vaillant*'s plate gives a very fair impression of the shape of that of the true "*Tchagra*."

Dr. Hartlaub (*op. cit.* p. 106) says that Prof. Schlegel does not consider *T. erythropterus* specifically distinct from the birds in-

* Swainson describes these as "entirely white, but tinged with grey on the sides, and with cream colour on the belly, thighs, and under tail-coverts." No one could call them in either of my birds "white."

habiting South Africa and Spain—the “*Tchagra*” of Le Vaillant,—but that they should be considered local races; and he goes on to say that a specimen from Senegal in the Bremen collection which he was inclined to consider the female of *T. erythropterus*, differs in its smaller dimensions, lighter colour and thinner bill, and in the brown colour of the forehead.

What is a species, and what a local race I leave to Prof. Schlegel to determine; but can the Bremen bird be, as it seems to me, a true “*Tchagra*” from Senegal? If so, the two races or species are mingled together there, and the assertion that it is a local race cannot be maintained.

The Spanish bird, from what I can gather from Dr. Bree (B. Eur. i. pp. 171, 172) appears to be the true *T. erythropterus* (L.), not the “*Tchagra*” of Le Vaillant.

Le Vaillant’s “*Tchagra*” is common enough in the places described by him, and is the only one to be met with in the parts of the country visited by him. I hope to be able to ascertain how far it extends to the eastward before it gives place to the black-headed species; but I have already received it from a more easterly point than LeVaillant ever reached. I have sent my Natal correspondent the true “*Tchagra*,” and have requested him to look closely into the subject, to see if he can find it there. I find *T. senegalus*, with a reference to Le Vaillant’s plate, included in the list of birds procured by Andersson in Damaraland (Contr. Orn. 1852, p. 145), but I do not recollect seeing it among such of his specimens as passed through my hands.

XXXV.—*List of Birds obtained in the Irawadi valley around Ava, Thayet Myo, and Bassein.* By W. T. BLANFORD, C.M.Z.S.

THE following is a list of birds obtained by me in the years 1861 and 1862, partly during a visit to Mandélé, the modern capital of Ava, but chiefly either around Thayet Myo, in Upper Pegu, or in the Bassein district, in Lower Pegu. I was principally induced to collect by the accident of meeting Dr. Jerdon at Thayet Myo; but at that time, before his invaluable ‘Birds of India’ was published, the determination of species